

Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies

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Maryland Poll

Most Important Issue

Slots

Baltimore City Public Schools

Presidential and U.S. Senate Contests

March 2004

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Methodology

Patrick E. Gonzales graduated from the University of Baltimore in 1981 with a degree in political science. He is the former president of Mason-Dixon Campaign Polling and Gonzales/Arscott Research & Communications, Inc.

Over the past two decades, Mr. Gonzales has polled and analyzed hundreds of elections in Maryland. Additionally, he and his associates have conducted numerous market research projects and crafted message development programs for businesses and organizations throughout the state.

Laslo V. Boyd is president of *Mellenbrook Policy Advisors*, a consulting firm specializing in policy, planning, and communications strategies, and an associate partner of Gonzales Research. Dr. Boyd received his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania and has over 30 years of experience in higher education, government, and public policy.

This survey was conducted by *Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies* from March 19th through March 24th, 2004. A total of 825 registered voters in Maryland who vote regularly were interviewed by telephone. A cross-section of interviews were conducted in each jurisdiction within the state to reflect general election voting patterns.

The margin for error, according to customary statistical standards, is no more than plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. There is a 95 percent probability that the “true” figures would fall within this range if the entire survey universe were sampled. The margin for error is higher for any demographic subgroup, such as gender or party affiliation.

Maryland Statewide Poll Sample Demographics

| Gender | | Race | | Region | |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|
| Male | 410 (50%) | White | 622 (75%) | Eastern Shore/S Md | 107 (13%) |
| Female | 415 (50%) | Black | 187 (23%) | Baltimore City | 82 (10%) |
| | | Other/Ref | 16 | Baltimore Suburbs | 279 (34%) |
| | | | | Washington Suburbs | 263 (32%) |
| | | | | Western Maryland | 94 (11%) |
| Party Registration | | | | | |
| Democrat | 460 (56%) | | | | |
| Republican | 264 (32%) | | | | |
| Independent | 101 (12%) | | | | |

Regional Groupings are as follows:

| Eastern Shore/ Southern Md | Baltimore City | Baltimore Suburbs | Washington Suburbs | Western Maryland |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Calvert Co. | Baltimore City | Anne Arundel Co. | Montgomery Co. | Allegany Co. |
| Caroline Co. | | Baltimore Co. | Prince George's Co. | Carroll Co. |
| Cecil Co. | | Harford Co. | | Frederick Co. |
| Charles Co. | | Howard Co. | | Garrett Co. |
| Dorchester Co. | | | | Washington Co. |
| Kent Co. | | | | |
| Queen Anne's Co. | | | | |
| Somerset Co. | | | | |
| St. Mary's Co. | | | | |
| Talbot Co. | | | | |
| Wicomico Co. | | | | |
| Worcester Co. | | | | |

Summary

Most Important Issue Facing Governor and Legislature

Statewide, a 27% plurality of Maryland voters say that education is the most important issue facing the Governor and Legislature today, while 18% say that it's the budget deficit, and 13% say it's the economy and jobs. Other issues received only single-digit mention.

Most Important Issue in Maryland

| #1 Issue | Education | Deficit |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|
| March 2004 | 27% | 18% |
| February 2004 | 24% | 23% |
| August 2003 | 23% | 29% |
| March 2003 | 12% | 51% |
| January 2003 | 12% | 46% |

Education as the number one issue has been moving up over the past year.

Slots in Maryland

A majority of voters still favor legalizing slot machines in the state, but support has slipped slightly since the fall. Statewide, 54% of Marylanders favor legalizing slot machines in the state, while 35% are opposed, and 11% offered no opinion.

| Slots | Favor | Oppose | No answer |
|---------------------|-------|--------|-----------|
| March 2004 | 54% | 35% | 11% |
| October 2003 | 56% | 34% | 10% |
| August 2003 | 57% | 31% | 12% |
| March 2003 | 47% | 45% | 8% |
| January 2003 | 46% | 40% | 14% |
| August 2002 | 46% | 37% | 17% |

The Washington suburbs remain the one jurisdiction in Maryland opposed to allowing slots into the state, with 51% against legalization.

Slots - General Assembly or Referendum

Attempting to discern how Marylanders would prefer having the issue of slots resolved, we asked the following question:

“On the issue of allowing slot machines in Maryland, which of the following do you believe is the better way for the state to make the decision:

- *The General Assembly should decide the issue this year before it adjourns in April, or*
- *The issue should be sent to referendum and the voters of Maryland should decide it on this November’s ballot?”*

Statewide, an overwhelming 79% say the issue should be sent to referendum for the voters to decide, compared to 18% who want the General Assembly to bring about a resolution. Support for having the legislature decide the issue was greatest among Republican voters, but even among this bloc, 67% prefer that the issue be determined by a referendum.

Baltimore City Public Schools

Recently, a political showdown over the Baltimore City public school crisis was averted when Mayor Martin O’Malley’s administration decided to lend the school system enough money to deal with its immediate financial deficit. But if the financial problems persist, a majority of Maryland voters think the State should step in and provide financial assistance to the City.

Fifty-eight percent say that if the financial problems of Baltimore City’s public school system become worse in the future, the State step in and help out, while 33% think that the City should continue to deal with the problem on its own.

Among African-American voters, 74% say the State should provide assistance if the problems keep on, and among whites, 53% think likewise.

By region, a majority of voters in every jurisdiction favors State assistance to the City, except for voters from the Eastern Shore/Southern Maryland, where 42% think the State should step in and 39% think Baltimore should continue to deal with the problem on its own.

George W. Bush Job Approval

President Bush’s job approval rating in the Free State is up a little over the past month, but a plurality still disapproves of his performance in office.

Statewide, 45% approve of Bush’s job performance as president, while 47% disapprove, with 8% offering no opinion.

| Bush Job Rating | Approve | Disapprove | No answer |
|------------------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| March 2004 | 45% | 47% | 8% |
| February 2004 | 41% | 53% | 6% |
| December 2003 | 47% | 46% | 7% |
| August 2003 | 43% | 48% | 9% |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| April 2003 | 62% | 31% | 7% |
| September 2002 | 63% | 28% | 9% |
| January 2002 | 74% | 16% | 10% |
| May 2001 | 48% | 34% | 18% |
| February 2001 | 47% | 34% | 19% |

Presidential Match-up

Four years ago Ralph Nader's inclusion in the presidential contest drained votes that likely would have gone to Democrat Al Gore. In several states where the balloting was extremely close -- Florida most notably -- this was decisive. Nader today, however, seems to have almost no traction.

Statewide, 48% say they'll vote for presumptive Democratic nominee John Kerry, while 43% favor Bush, less than 1% say they will vote for Nader, and 9% are undecided.

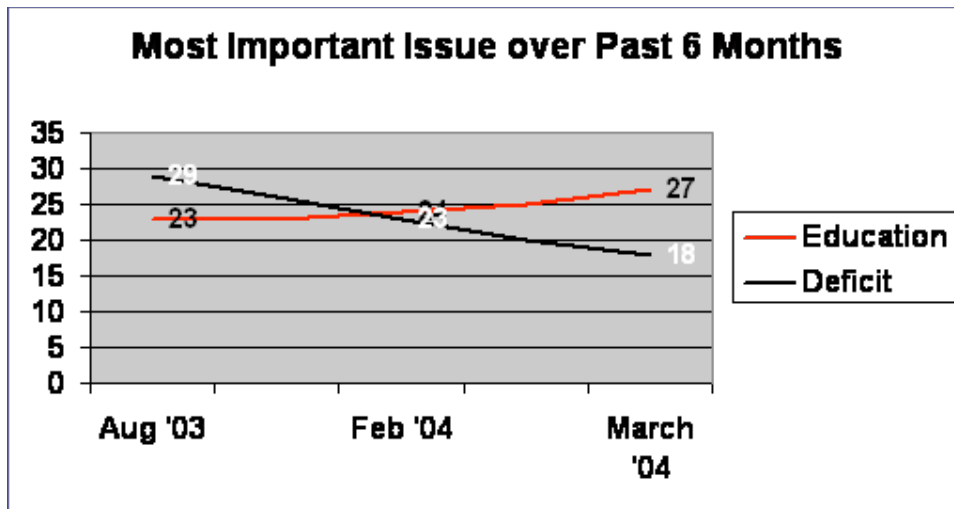
U.S. Senate

Sixty-two percent of Maryland voters approve of the job Barbara Mikulski is doing as a United States Senator, while 23% disapprove. By party affiliation, 81% of Democrats approve of the job she's doing, 66% of independents approve, and 27% of Republicans support her performance in office (53% of GOP voters disapprove).

In a match-up with Republican nominee E.J. Pipkin, Mikulski enjoys a commanding 59% to 27% advantage, with 14% undecided. Mikulski has an overwhelming lead with Democrats (79%-8%), and beats Pipkin among independents 57% to 18%.

QUESTION: *What do you feel is the most important issue facing the Governor and Legislature today?*

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Education | 27% |
| Budget deficit | 18% |
| Economy/jobs | 13% |
| Crime/illegal drugs | 8% |
| Taxes | 7% |
| Health care/prescription drugs | 5% |
| Traffic/transportation/roads | 4% |
| Slots /gambling | 4% |
| Environment | 3% |
| Growth/development | 2% |
| Gun control | 2% |
| Threat of terrorism/security | 1% |
| No answer | 6% |



QUESTION: *Do you favor or oppose allowing slot machines in Maryland?*

Statewide Results

| Response | Statewide |
|----------|------------|
| Favor | 54% |
| Oppose | 35% |
| Not Sure | 11% |

Party - *Favor or oppose slot machines?*

| Party | Favor | Oppose | Not Sure |
|-------------|-------|--------|----------|
| Democrat | 51% | 36% | 13% |
| Republican | 59% | 31% | 10% |
| Independent | 56% | 40% | 4% |

Gender – *Favor or oppose slot machines?*

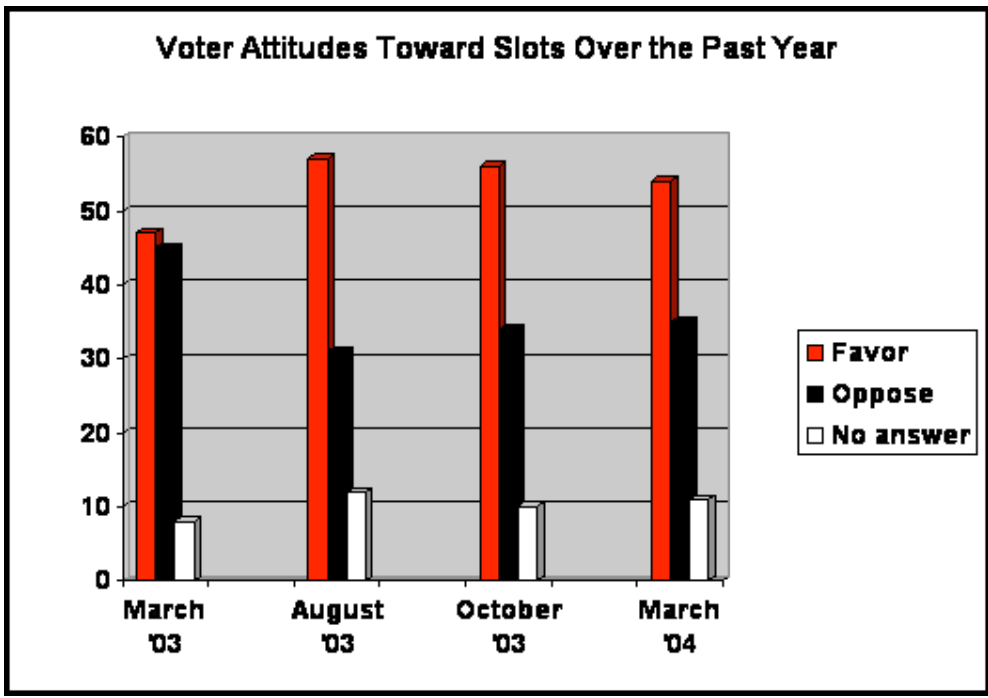
| Gender | Favor | Oppose | Not Sure |
|--------|-------|--------|----------|
| Men | 56% | 34% | 10% |
| Women | 52% | 36% | 12% |

Race – *Favor or oppose slot machines?*

| Race | Favor | Oppose | Not Sure |
|------------------|-------|--------|----------|
| White | 54% | 35% | 11% |
| African-American | 55% | 35% | 10% |

Region - Favor or oppose slot machines?

| Region | Favor | Oppose | Not Sure |
|-------------------------------|-------|--------|----------|
| Eastern Shore/ Southern MD | 63% | 22% | 15% |
| Baltimore City | 55% | 38% | 7% |
| Baltimore Suburbs | 61% | 26% | 13% |
| Washington Suburbs | 41% | 51% | 8% |
| Western Maryland | 57% | 31% | 12% |



QUESTION: *On the issue of allowing slot machines in Maryland, which of the following do you believe is the better way for the state to make the decision: (ORDER ROTATED)*

- *The General Assembly should decide the issue this year before it adjourns in April, or*
- *The issue should be sent to referendum and the voters of Maryland should decide it on this November's ballot?*

Statewide Results

| Response | Statewide |
|-------------------------|------------|
| General Assembly Decide | 18% |
| Send to Referendum | 79% |
| Not Sure/No Answer | 3% |

Party – Better way for State to make decision regarding slots?

| Party | General Assembly Decide | Send to Referendum | No Answer |
|-------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Democrat | 14% | 84% | 2% |
| Republican | 29% | 67% | 4% |
| Independent | 8% | 89% | 3% |

Gender – Better way for State to make decision regarding slots?

| Gender | General Assembly Decide | Send to Referendum | No Answer |
|--------|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Men | 23% | 75% | 2% |
| Women | 13% | 83% | 4% |

QUESTION: *As you may know, the Baltimore City Public School system is facing severe financial problems. If the financial problems become worse in the future, do you think the state should step in and provide financial assistance to the City, or do you think Baltimore City should continue to deal with the problem on its own?*

Statewide Results

| Response | Statewide |
|--------------------------|------------|
| State Provide Assistance | 58% |
| City Deal with on Own | 33% |
| No Answer | 9% |

Race – *State should step in and provide assistance, or Baltimore City should continue to deal with the problem on its own?*

| Race | State Provide Assistance | City Deal with on Own | No Answer |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| White | 53% | 37% | 10% |
| African-American | 74% | 20% | 6% |

Region - *State should step in and provide assistance, or Baltimore City should continue to deal with the problem on its own?*

| Region | State Provide Assistance | City Deal with on Own | No Answer |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| Eastern Shore/ Southern MD | 42% | 39% | 19% |
| Baltimore City | 68% | 23% | 9% |
| Baltimore Suburbs | 65% | 30% | 5% |
| Washington Suburbs | 54% | 36% | 10% |
| Western Maryland | 57% | 38% | 5% |

QUESTION: *Do you approve or disapprove of the job George Bush is doing as president?*

Statewide Results

| Response | Statewide |
|------------|-----------|
| Approve | 45% |
| Disapprove | 47% |
| No Answer | 8% |

Party - Approve or disapprove of the job George Bush is doing as president?

| Party | Approve | Disapprove | No Answer |
|-------------|---------|------------|-----------|
| Democrat | 22% | 70% | 8% |
| Republican | 84% | 9% | 7% |
| Independent | 50% | 39% | 11% |

QUESTION: If the November 2004 general election for president were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were George Bush, the Republican, John Kerry, the Democrat, and Ralph Nader, an independent?

Statewide Results

| Response | Statewide |
|-----------|-----------|
| Kerry | 48% |
| Bush | 43% |
| Nader | * |
| Undecided | 9% |

* (Less than 1%)

Party – Presidential contest?

| Party | Kerry | Bush | Nader | Undecided |
|-------------|-------|------|-------|-----------|
| Democrat | 74% | 18% | * | 8% |
| Republican | 5% | 86% | * | 9% |
| Independent | 41% | 46% | 1% | 12% |

QUESTION: Do you approve or disapprove of the job Barbara Mikulski is doing as a U.S. Senator?

Statewide Results

| Response | Statewide |
|------------|-----------|
| Approve | 62% |
| Disapprove | 23% |
| No Answer | 15% |

Party - Approve or disapprove of the job Barbara Mikulski is doing as a U.S. Senator?

| Party | Approve | Disapprove | No Answer |
|-------------|---------|------------|-----------|
| Democrat | 81% | 7% | 12% |
| Republican | 27% | 53% | 20% |
| Independent | 66% | 17% | 17% |

QUESTION: *If the November 2004 election for U.S. Senate were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were Edward J. (E.J.) Pipkin, the Republican, and Barbara Mikulski, the Democrat?*

Statewide Results

| Response | Statewide |
|-----------|------------|
| Mikulski | 59% |
| Pipkin | 27% |
| Undecided | 14% |

Party – 2004 United States Senate Match-up?

| Party | Mikulski | Pipkin | Undecided |
|-------------|----------|--------|-----------|
| Democrat | 79% | 8% | 13% |
| Republican | 26% | 63% | 11% |
| Independent | 57% | 18% | 25% |